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ABSTRACT

In North Carolina as part of Central Piedmont Community College's (CPCC's) efforts to identify the training needs of the local service area and determine future directions for planning, a survey was conducted of 6,601 students in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg high school system regarding their plans and perceptions of the college. Study findings, based on responses from the 41.6% who were in the 12th grade, included the following: (1) 68.5% of the respondents indicated that they planned to attend college full-time after high school and 29.6% that they planned to attend part-time; (2) of those not planning to attend college, 15.9% indicated that they would attend if they had additional financial support, while 13.9% expressed an interest in on-the-job training programs and 8.3% in apprenticeship programs; (3) 41% were considering pursuing a four-year bachelor's degree, 7% a two-year associate degree, and 2.9% a one-year certificate or diploma; (4) among college-bound White respondents, 28% expressed an interest in CPCC, compared to 19.1% of college-bound Black respondents; (5) while 66.1% agreed with the statement that CPCC was a good place to study part-time and earn a degree, 38.8% agreed that the college was the second choice for most students; and (6) the areas of study in which students expressed the most interest were business (21.4%), computers (15.7%), engineering (11.8%), and nursing (9.7%). (KP)

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ED 384 374

1994 High School Survey

Executive Summary

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Foreword

Central Piedmont Community College's vision is to become the nation's leader in work-force development. Achievement of that vision will be dependent on the College's understanding of and responsiveness to the needs of citizens in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg service region for initial work force preparation, for the first two years of a four-year degree, and for subsequent training and retraining. To reach that objective, Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) is engaging in the development of a strategic master plan. Results of the High School Student Survey conducted in Spring 1994 and reported in this publication will be utilized as the College sets its direction for 2005 and the achievement of its vision. Our thanks to all of you who assisted with these efforts.

Tony Zeiss, EdD
President, CPCC

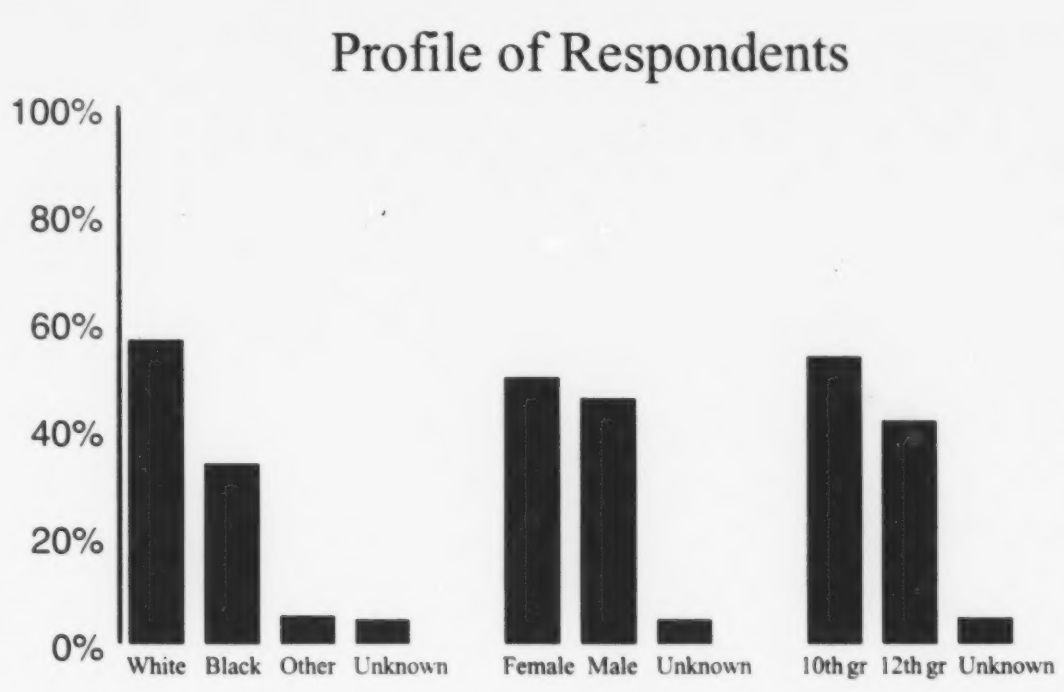
CPCC Strategic Master Plan Study
1994 High School Survey
Executive Summary

During the academic year 1994-95, Central Piedmont Community College is developing a master plan which will provide the direction for the College into the twenty-first century. The planning effort asks two questions: (1) What are the education and training needs of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region? and (2) How can CPCC best meet these needs?

The findings of the High School Student Survey as reported in this study provide a partial answer to these questions, as they document the following information about high school students: (1) post high school plans, (2) factors influencing student selection of a college, (3) perceptions of CPCC, (4) interest in attending CPCC, (5) assistance required while in college, and (6) career aspirations. Additionally, the study identifies students who want to be contacted by CPCC.

Respondents

The survey was administered by Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System teachers to 6,601 students. By race, over one-half (56.7 percent) of the respondents were White; about one-third (33.6 percent) were Black; 5.2 percent were of other races; and the race of the remaining 4.5 percent was unknown. By gender, 49.7 percent were female, and 45.8 percent were male; the gender of the remaining 4.5 percent was unknown. Over one-half (53.6 percent) of the respondents were in the 10th grade; 41.6 percent were in the 12th grade; and the grade of the remaining 4.8 percent was unknown.

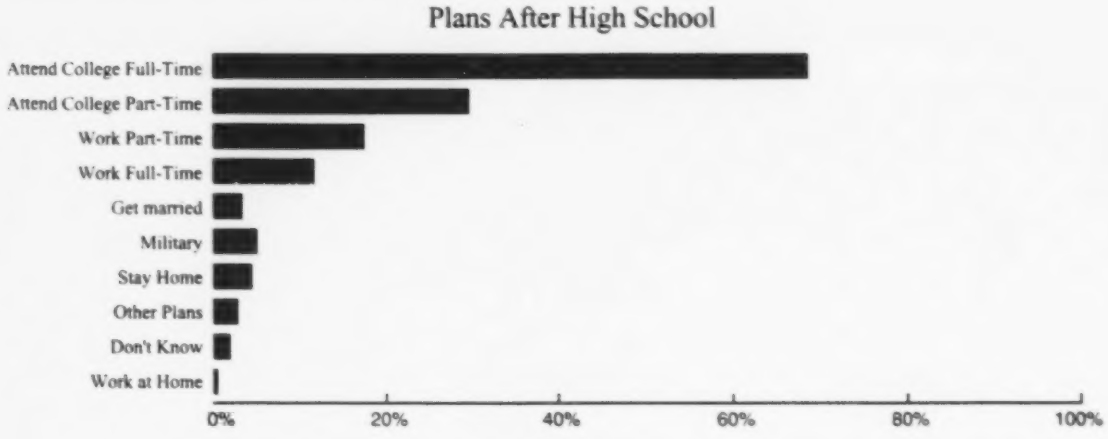


Results

Unless otherwise stated, results presented pertain only to 12th graders. This approach is taken for two reasons. First, for the most part, only slight differences existed between the responses of 10th and 12th graders; significant differences will be discussed later in this study. Second, this study is primarily interested in 12th graders; this grade level is the one closest to making decisions about college attendance. Thus, the 12th grade cohort is the College's most immediate high school population and serves as a sample of 12th graders for the future.

Post High School Plans of Students

Responses to questions in this category indicated the percentage of students planning to attend college, when and where the students would attend, and the type of degrees under consideration by them. The majority of students (68.5 percent) planned to attend college full-time, and 29.6 percent planned to attend college part-time.



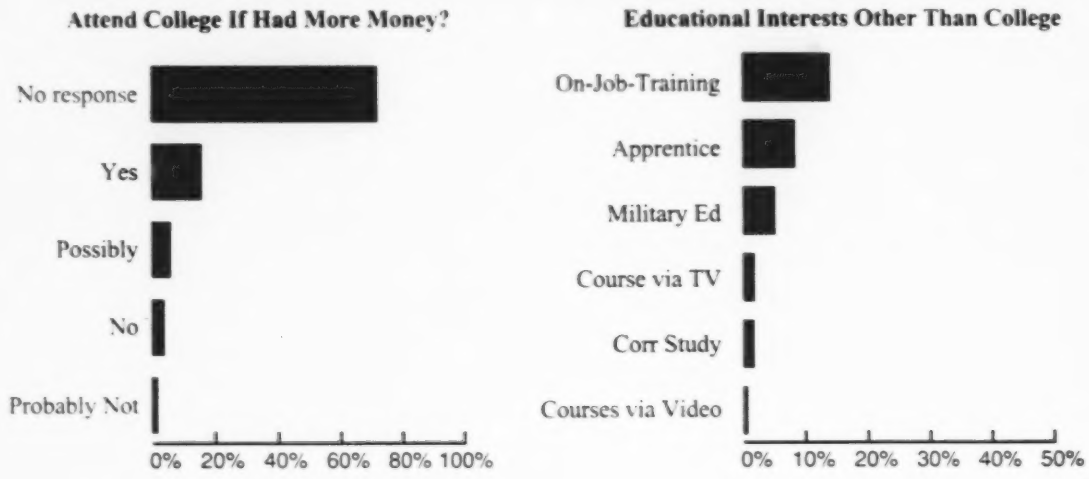
Many students planned to work while attending college. Of those who planned to attend college full-time, 64.7 percent intended to work part-time, and 19.8 percent intended to work full-time. Of those who planned to attend college part-time, 28.3 percent intended to work part-time, and 39.5 percent intended to work full-time.

College Attendance By Work Plans.

College Plans	Work Part-time	Work Full-time
Attend college full-time	64.7%	19.8%
Attend college part-time	28.3%	39.5%

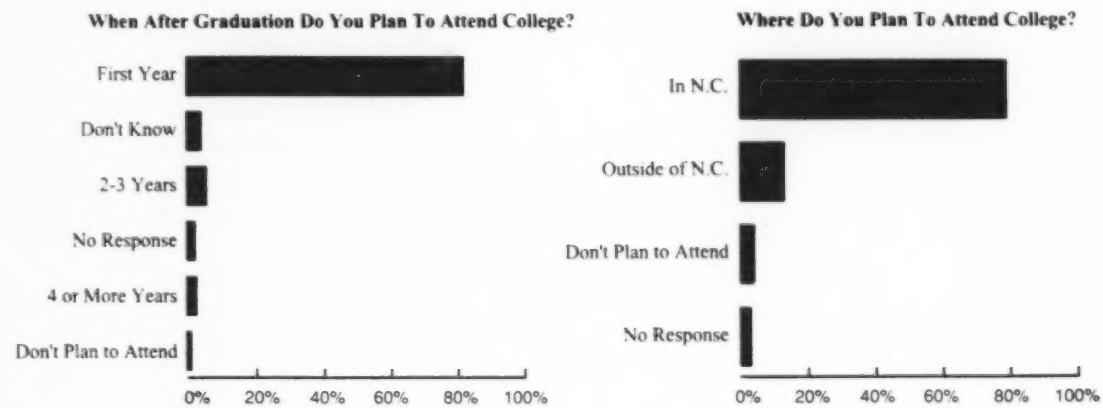
Two items focused on students who did not plan to attend college. One item asked students if they would attend if they had more money. About one-fifth (15.9 percent) indicated that they would attend college if they had additional financial support. The second item inquired about educational interests other than college. The largest percentage of students (13.9 percent) indicated an interest in on-the-job training; 8.3 percent were interested in apprentice programs; and 5.1 percent were interested in education through the military. Relatively few students were interested in courses via TV, video, or correspondence.

Respondents Not Planning To Attend College



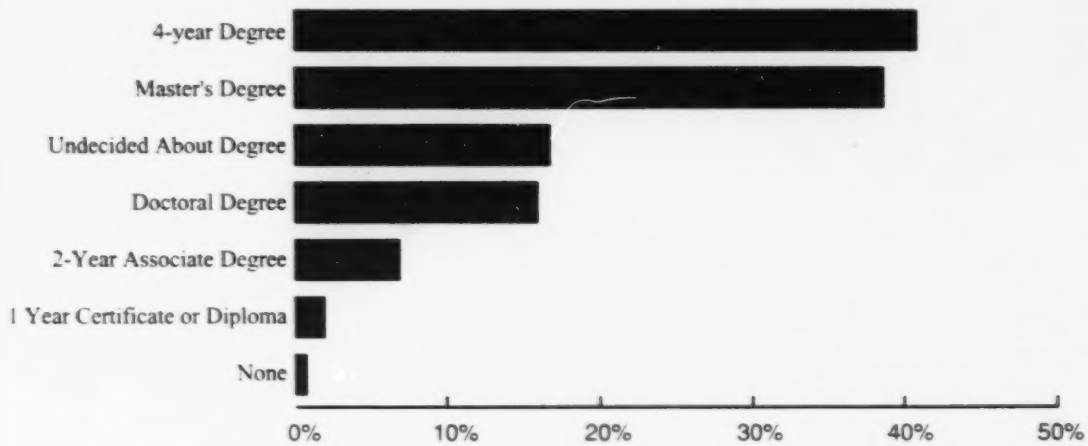
Over four-fifths of the respondents (82.2 percent) planned to attend college the first year after high school, and most (79.0 percent) planned to attend college in North Carolina.

When & Where Respondents Plan to Attend College



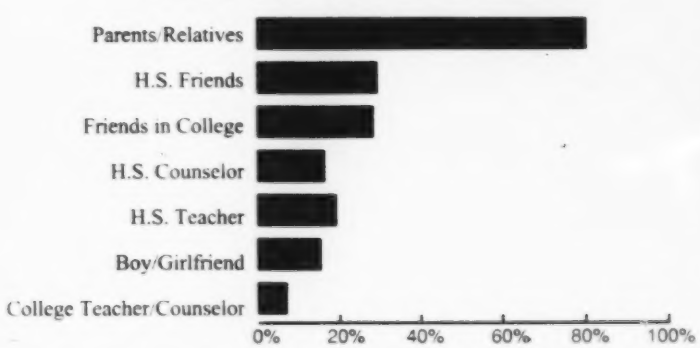
Most were considering either a four-year bachelor's degree (41.0 percent) or a master's degree (38.8 percent); 7.0 percent were considering a two-year associate degree, and 2.9 percent were considering a one-year certificate or diploma.

Type of Degree Considered

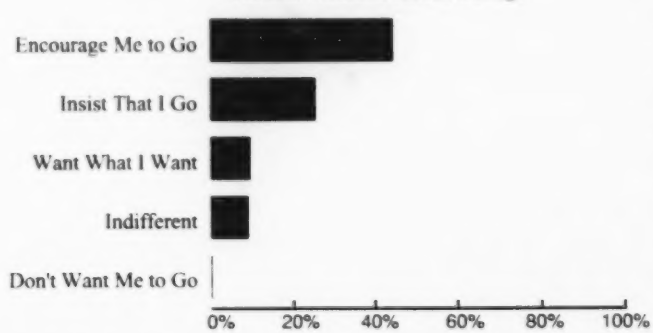


Influence & Attitudes of Others Regarding Decision to Attend College

Influentials Regarding Decision to Attend College



Parents' Attitude About College



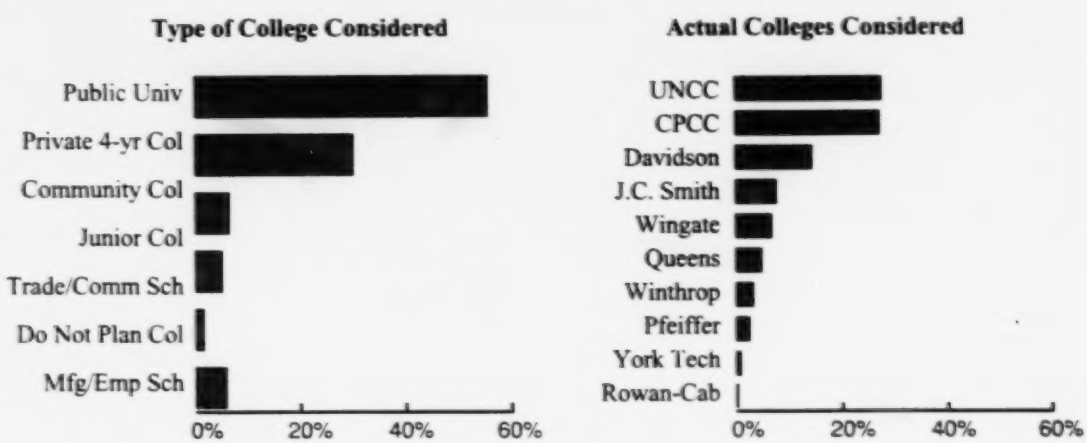
Factors Influencing College Selection

To determine how best to inform high school students about CPCC, various questionnaire items inquired about their decision-making process for selecting a college. When asked who would influence their decision, 80.5 percent of respondents indicated that parents/relatives would influence their decision; ranking second and third in influence were high school friends (29.6 percent) and friends in college (28.6 percent). Responses to the next item indicated that parents encouraged college attendance. The largest percentage (44.5 percent) of the respondents indicated that their parents were encouraging them to attend college, and 25.5 percent indicated that their parents insist that they attend college. Only 0.2 percent of the respondents indicated that their parents didn't want them to attend college. The "no response" rate for this item was 29.0 percent.

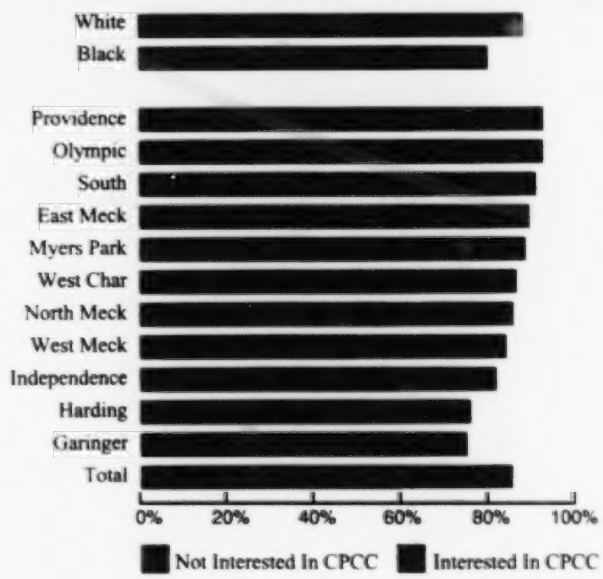
Colleges Being Considered

Slightly over one-half (55.7 percent) of the students were considering a public university, about one-third (30.2 percent) were considering a private four-year college and about one-third (42.0 percent) were considering a two-year college (30.2 percent were considering a community college, 6.6 percent a junior college, and 5.2 percent a trade/commercial school). When asked what colleges they were considering, the largest percent indicated either UNCC (27.6 percent) or CPCC (27.2 percent). The third ranked college was Davidson at 14.5 percent.

Colleges Considered



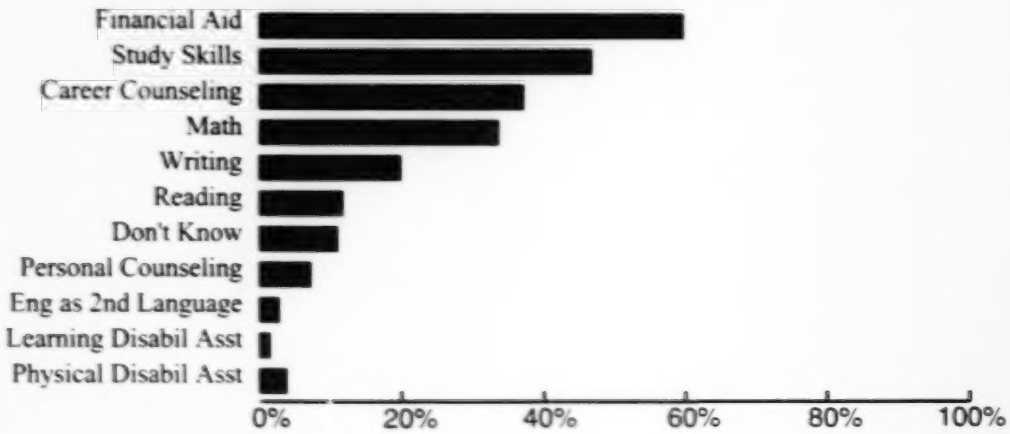
Percent of Respondents Planning to Attend College and Interested/Not Interested in CPCC



Because this study is especially interested in respondents who indicated an interest in CPCC, respondents were analyzed by ethnicity and high school and by the type of assistance they will require while in college. Of the 88.5 percent of college-bound White respondents, 28.0 percent indicated an interest in CPCC; of the 80.3 percent of college-bound Black students, 19.1 percent indicated an interest in CPCC. By school, intent to attend college ranged from 92.9 percent of respondents at Providence to 75.1 percent of respondents at Garinger; expressions of interest in attending CPCC ranged from a high of 35.9 percent of all respondents at Myers Park to a low of 14.5 percent of all respondents at Garinger. By total, 85.5 percent of all respondents planned to attend college; 25.1 percent expressed interest in attending CPCC.

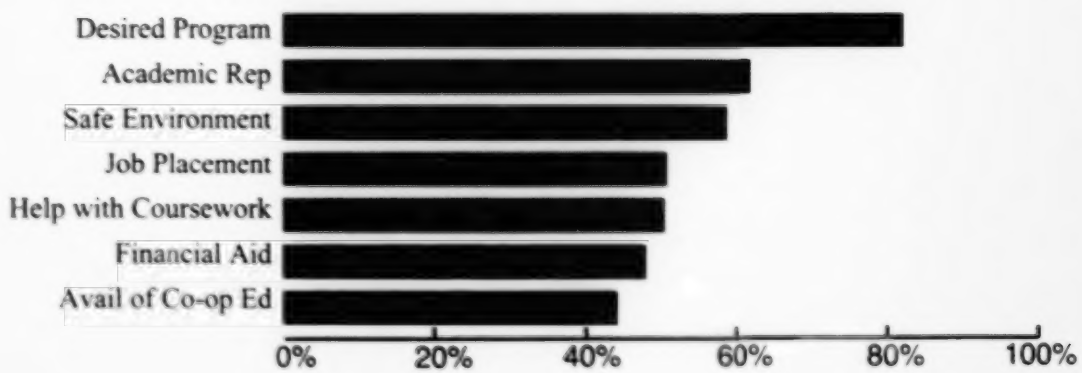
The other area of interest regarding students who might attend CPCC is the assistance that they will need. Of those respondents expressing interest in CPCC, the largest percentage (59.9) indicated a need for financial aid while in college. Other items with large percentages of expressed need were study skills (46.9 percent), career counseling (37.3 percent), and math (33.8 percent).

What Type of Assistance Will You Need While in College? (Respondents Expressing Interest in CPCC)



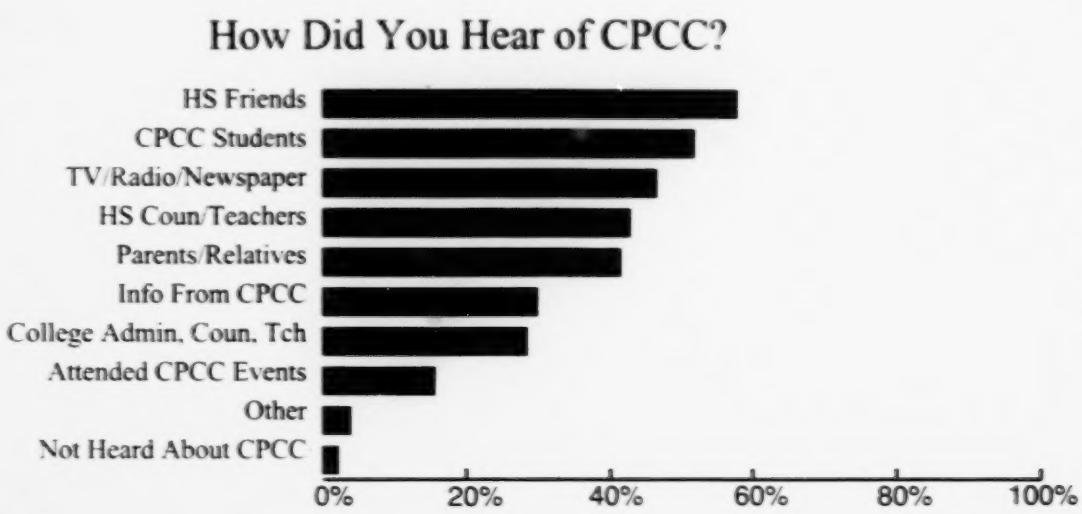
For guidance in communicating with high school students about CPCC, the questionnaire asked respondents to identify "very important" criteria for selecting a college. Forty percent or more of the respondents rated the following criteria as "very important": (1) offers desired program (82.9 percent); (2) good academic reputation (62.6 percent); (3) safe campus environment (59.3 percent); (4) availability of job placement (51.2 percent); (5) help with coursework (50.9 percent); (6) availability of financial aid (48.4 percent); and (7) availability of co-operative education (44.6 percent).

Criteria Rated as "Very Important" by Forty or More Percent of Respondents



High School Student Perceptions of CPCC

In an attempt to identify the communication channels of high school students, the questionnaire asked the respondents how they heard about CPCC. Responses indicated that the five most important sources about CPCC are: (1) high school friends (57.7 percent); (2) CPCC students (51.7 percent); (3) TV/radio/newspapers (46.4 percent); (4) high school counselors/teachers (42.7 percent); and (5) parents/relatives (41.4 percent).



To determine the impressions that high school students have about CPCC, respondents were presented with a series of statements about CPCC and asked if they agreed, disagreed, or didn't know. Responses to the statements identify negative perceptions that a marketing campaign must overcome and positive perceptions upon which a marketing effort can build. Additionally, the responses indicate the extent to which high school students don't know about CPCC.

Positive responses are indicated by the high percentages of respondents agreeing with the following statements: (1) "Good place to study part-time and earn a degree" (66.1 percent); (2) "Good place to get the first two years of a four-year degree" (62.8 percent); (3) "High quality education at affordable price" (58.1 percent); and (4) "Quality of education and teaching is good" (42.8 percent).

Negative perceptions are indicated by the responses to the following negatively worded statements: (1) 38.8 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that CPCC is the "second choice for most students"; (2) 25.8 percent agreed that CPCC is "primarily for students with low grades"; and (3) 15.3 percent agreed with the statement that "instruction at CPCC is not as good as at many other colleges."

Unclear perceptions are indicated by the percentages of "don't know" responses. For eight of the thirteen statements the largest percentage of respondents selected "don't know," indicating that, in the main, high school students just did not know enough about CPCC to have opinions about most of the items.

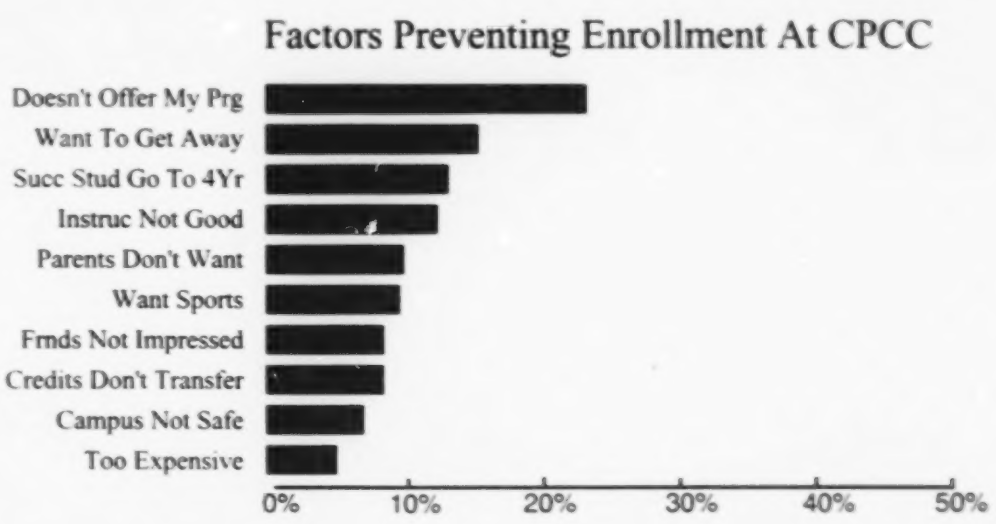
Impressions Of CPCC

Item	% Agree	% Dis-agree	% Don't Know	% No Response
POSITIVE STATEMENTS				
Good place to study part-time & earn a degree	66.1	3.2	20.6	10.1
Good place to get 1st 2 yrs of a 4-yr degree	62.8	4.3	26.7	6.2
High quality education at affordable price	58.1	3.7	32.0	6.2
Many good student organizations & activities	32.5	4.8	49.5	8.3
Quality of education & teaching is good	42.8	3.2	47.3	6.8
Students are proud to attend CPCC	24.9	19.0	49.5	6.7
CPCC instructors care about the students	24.0	3.1	65.6	7.3
Easy to find help with any kind of problem	20.8	3.9	68.7	6.7
Graduates get good jobs	19.9	4.9	68.5	6.7
Students from diverse backgrounds get along well	21.8	3.1	68.0	7.1
NEGATIVE STATEMENTS				
Second choice for most	38.8	23.5	29.4	8.3
Primarily for students with low grades	25.8	43.7	23.3	7.2
Instruction is not as good as at many other colleges	15.3	20.9	57.1	6.7

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

Factors Preventing CPCC Enrollment

Another category of inquiry sought to identify specific factors preventing high school graduates from enrolling at CPCC. The five most important factors/attitudes inhibiting enrollment at CPCC were (1) "does not offer what I want" (23.6 percent); (2) "want to get away from home" (15.7 percent); (3) "most students who succeed go to four-year colleges" (13.5 percent); (4) "instruction is not as good as elsewhere" (12.7 percent); and (5) "parents don't want me to go" (10.2 percent).



The final task of the questionnaire was to identify programs of study that were of interest to high school students, information of obvious value for targeting marketing efforts. This information is also important for evaluating the demand for specific programs of study. The ten programs with the greatest percentage of expressed interest were business (21.4 percent); computers (15.8 percent); engineering (11.8 percent); nursing (9.7 percent); accounting (9.5 percent); physical therapist (9.5 percent); marketing (8.4 percent); architecture (7.6 percent); social services (7.4 percent); and medical assisting (7.0 percent). It should be noted that respondents marked all areas in which they had an interest. Thus, many students indicated an interest in several areas.

If You Were To Attend CPCC, What Areas Of Study Would You Be Interested In?

Item	% Total	Item	% Total
Business	21.4	Travel/tourism	4.3
Computers	15.8	Automotive	4.1
Engineering	11.8	Drafting	4.0
Nursing	9.7	Dental	3.9
Accounting	9.5	Real estate	3.5
Physical therapist	9.5	Hotel/restaurant	3.4
Marketing	8.4	Secretary	3.0
Architecture	7.6	Horticulture	2.0
Social services	7.4	Bookkeeping/clerical	1.9
Medical assisting	7.0	Fire protection	1.8
Electronics	6.8	Insurance	1.8
Graphics	6.3	Postal service	1.7
Early childhood	6.0	Welding	1.5
Interior design	5.5	Respiratory care	1.2
Paralegal	5.5	Machinist	1.0
Banking	5.3	Traffic/transport	0.8
Commercial art	5.3	Interpreter training	0.8
Medical office	4.5	Surveying	0.7
Emergency medical	4.4	Air conditioning	0.7
Occupational health	4.4	Industrial	0.4

Differences in 10th and 12th Grade Responses

The responses of 10th and 12th graders were very similar for all except the following: (1) a significantly larger percentage of 12th graders expressed an interest in CPCC (27.2 percent to 16.2 percent); (2) 50.8 percent of 12th graders expressed the need for financial aid while in college compared to only 39.7 percent of 10th graders; and (3) in responding to the positive and negative statements about CPCC, 12th graders tended to express more favorable attitudes toward CPCC than did 10th graders. For example, 62.8 percent of 12th graders agreed that CPCC is "a good place to get the first two years of a four-year degree" compared to only 46.2 percent of 10th graders.

Comparison Of The Responses Of 10th And 12th Graders.

Item	10th Grade Percent	12th Grade Percent
Plans After High School?		
Attend college full-time	69.6	68.7
Attend college part-time	28.8	29.6
When do you plan to attend college?		
First year after graduation	72.7	76.4
Where will the college be?		
In North Carolina	79.7	79.1
Educational degree you plan to earn?		
Four-year degree	35.3	41.0
Master's degree	32.5	34.9
Who will influence your college decision?		
Parents/relatives	83.2	81.6
Parents' attitude about college?		
Encourage me to go	42.1	44.5
Insist that I go	27.2	25.5
Colleges considered?		
UNCC	27.3	27.6
CPCC	16.2	27.2
Assistance needed if you attend CPCC?		
Financial aid	39.7	50.8
Study skills	44.8	43.8
Very important factors in selecting a college?		
Offers programs/courses that I want	81.6	82.9
Good academic reputation	58.7	62.6
Safe campus environment	60.4	59.3
Factor preventing enrollment at CPCC?		
Does not offer what I want	23.6	27.4
Most students who succeed go to 4-yr colleges	13.5	15.8
Impressions of CPCC? (Percent In Agreement)		
Good place to study part-time & earn a degree	57.5	66.1
Good place to get 1st 2 yrs of a 4-yr degree	46.8	62.8
High quality education at affordable price	46.2	58.1
Second choice for most students	36.6	38.8
Primarily for students with low grades	23.4	25.8
Instruction not as good as at other colleges	16.8	15.3
Study Areas Of Interest?		
Business	19.1	21.4
Computers	18.6	15.8
Engineering	14.6	11.8
Nursing	11.6	10.8

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

Plans to attend college

• The great majority of the high school students planned to attend college, 68.5 percent full-time and 29.6 percent part-time.

• About three-fourths (82.2 percent) of the respondents planned to attend college the first year after graduation. About three-fourths (79.0 percent) of the students planned to attend a college in North Carolina.

• Over one-third (41.0 percent) of the respondents planned to earn a bachelor's degree; 38.8 percent planned to earn a master's degree. Seven percent planned to earn a 2-year degree; 2.0 percent planned to earn a 1-year certificate or diploma.

Selecting a college

• By far, the greatest percentage of respondents (80.5 percent) indicated that parents/relatives will influence their decision to attend college; only 1.1 percent of respondents indicated that their parents were either indifferent or opposed to their going to college.

• By type of college, over one-half of the respondents (55.7 percent) were considering a public university. Over one-half (52.0 percent) of the respondents were also considering some form of a two-year college (either a community college, a junior college, or a trade/commercial school). Almost one-third (30.2 percent) were considering a private four-year college.

• In regard to specific area colleges, the greatest percentage were considering UNC-Charlotte (27.6 percent) or CPCC (27.2 percent). Following in order of magnitude were Davidson (14.5 percent), J.C. Smith (7.8 percent), Wingate (6.9 percent), Queens (5.0 percent), Winthrop (3.4 percent), Pfeiffer (2.7 percent), York Tech (1.0 percent), and Rowan-Cabarrus (0.5 percent).

• Almost one-third (28.0 percent) of all White respondents indicated an interest in CPCC compared to about one-fourth (19.1 percent) of all Black respondents. By high school, expressions of interest in attending CPCC ranged from a high of 35.9 percent of all respondents at Myers Park High School to a low of 14.5 percent of all respondents at Garinger High School. By total, 25.1 percent of all respondents expressed interest in attending CPCC.

• Of those respondents expressing interest in CPCC, the largest percentage (59.9 percent) indicated a need for financial aid while in college. Other items with large percentages of expressed need were study skills (46.9 percent), career counseling (37.3 percent), and math (33.8 percent).

• Forty percent or more of the respondents indicated that the following seven criteria were "very important" in selecting a college: (1) offers desired program (82.9 percent), (2) good academic reputation (62.6 percent), (3) safe campus environment (59.3 percent), (4) availability of job placement (51.2 percent), (5) help with coursework (50.9 percent), (6) availability of financial aid (48.4 percent), and (7) availability of co-operative education (44.6 percent).

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

Thoughts about CPCC

- The largest percentage (37.7 percent) heard about CPCC from high school friends; the next largest percentage (31.7 percent) heard of CPCC from CPCC students. Only 2.3 percent had not heard of CPCC.

- Positive impressions of CPCC were indicated by the high percentages of respondents agreeing with the following statements: (1) "good place to study part-time and earn a degree" (66.1 percent); (2) "good place to get the first two years of a four-year degree" (62.8 percent); (3) "high quality education at affordable price" (58.1 percent); and (4) "quality of education and teaching is good" (42.8 percent).

- Negative perceptions were held by smaller percentages of respondents and were indicated by the following responses: (1) 38.8 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that CPCC is the "second choice for most students"; (2) 25.8 percent agreed that CPCC is "primarily for students with low grades"; and (3) 15.3 percent agreed with the statement that "instruction at CPCC is not as good as at many other colleges."

- Unclear perceptions were indicated by the percentages of "don't know" responses. For eight of the thirteen statements, the largest percentage of respondents selected "don't know." For example, 68.7 percent of respondents didn't know whether or not it is "easy to find help with any kind of problem"; 68.5 percent didn't know if "CPCC graduates get good jobs"; and 68.0 percent didn't know if "students from diverse backgrounds get along well." This indicates that, on most issues, high school students just don't know enough about CPCC to have opinions.

- When asked about the factors preventing them from enrolling at CPCC, the five leading responses were as follows: (1) 23.6 percent of the respondents indicated that CPCC "does not offer the program/courses that I want"; (2) 15.7 percent "wanted to get away from home"; (3) 13.5 percent had the opinion that "most students who succeed go to four-year colleges"; (4) 12.7 percent thought that "instruction at CPCC is not as good as elsewhere"; and (5) 10.2 percent indicated that "my parents don't want me to go".

Career aspirations

- The ten areas of study with the greatest percentage of expressed interest were business (21.4 percent), computers (15.8 percent), engineering (11.8 percent), nursing (9.7 percent), accounting (9.5 percent), physical therapist (9.5 percent), marketing (8.4 percent), architecture (7.6 percent), social services (7.4 percent), and medical assisting (7.0 percent). Inasmuch as respondents could select more than one area of study, many students indicated interest in several areas.

Comparison of responses of 10th and 12th Graders

- On most issues, not much difference existed between the responses of 10th and 12th graders. However, there was a striking difference in regard to the item inquiring about colleges considered. While 27.2 percent of 12th graders expressed interest in CPCC, only 16.2 percent of 10th graders expressed such interest. Additionally, 12th graders tended to hold more positive perceptions of CPCC than did 10th graders.

Looking Ahead

As part of its vision to become the nation's leader in workforce development, Central Piedmont Community College wishes to become known as the source of training and retraining for citizens in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The results of the 1994 High School Survey provide the College with information about the plans, needs, and perceptions of high school students. When combined with the information being gathered in community and employer focus group discussions, published documents, and one-on-one interviews, this information will serve to shape the College's planning of programs, services, and resources for workforce development over the next ten years.

For additional information about CPCC's programs:

Business, Health, and Technology Curriculum Programs; Apprenticeship Programs; Tech Prep Program

Dr. Tom Leitzel
Dean, Business, Health, and Technologies
(704) 342-6860

New & Expanding Industry, In Plant, and Customized Training; Small Business/ International Services

Dr. Sherrie Kantor
Dean, Corporate & Continuing Education
(704) 342-6428

Co-operative Education Program
Sandra Lare
(704) 342-6217

Workforce Preparedness Training
Vicki Efird
(704) 342-6714

Two-year College Transfer Program
Dr. David Hunter
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Adult Basic Literacy Education Program
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